



TESTIMONY OF
WINSTON HEIMER, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS
BEFORE THE FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FEBRUARY 27, 2023

IN SUPPORT OF HB 5673 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REFORMATION OF CERTAIN TAXES AND TAX EQUITY.

Senator Fonfara, Senator Martin, Representative Horn, Representative Cheeseman and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present this testimony. My name is Winston Heimer. I am a resident of West Hartford and the Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Alliance for Retired Americans.

I write on behalf of the 50,000 members of the CT Alliance for Retired Americans which is a member of the Recovery for All Coalition. We are testifying in strong support of HB 5673.

“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times...” More than 150 years ago, Charles Dickens penned those words in his historical novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, which dealt with the 18th century French Revolution. One of the leading causes of that revolution was the gross income inequality that existed in France in those days.

It seems we haven’t come too far in the past 150 years.

Working people in Connecticut contribute more than 25% of their annual income in state and local taxes, whereas billionaires and multimillionaires contribute merely 6%. Working families, especially families of color, have seen their incomes plummet, while the wealthy few grew even wealthier while paying lower taxes than anyone else.

Connecticut leads in income inequality, leaving the poorest residents to deal with education gaps, health disparities, unattainable home ownership and other hardships. Years of austerity and disinvestment have worsened inequities and hampered economic growth. The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated each and every inequity. Vulnerable populations, who struggled to make ends meet before, are battling to survive. Yet the wealthy continue to profit from a booming stock market, adding billions to their portfolios.

We need to fully fund long-term care, including affordable health care for caregivers, to ensure quality services and uplift home care workers, group home workers and nursing home workers out of poverty. We need to expand staffing at the Department of Public Health to be prepared for the next public health crisis.

We need a people's recovery that makes working families its first priority. We need a state budget that has jobs, healthcare, food insecurity, economic opportunity, and inequality as its main focus.

We urge you to support HB 5673 to accomplish those ends.

Thank you for this opportunity to place our testimony on record.